

City of Oklahoma City
Budgeting and Financial Planning Policies
Adopted 2/15/2011

1. **Balanced Budget.** Under Title 11, Oklahoma statutes, Section 17-206, the budget of expenditures for a fund may not exceed the estimated revenues, including budgeted fund balance, for the fund. Fund Balance should not be budgeted as revenue to support ongoing operations in the annual budget. Fund Balance may be budgeted to fund one-time expenses such as capital projects. Fund balance may be drawn upon for cash flow needs, and may be used as revenue without amending the budget if other revenue sources in total fall short of the estimate used in the adopted budget.
2. **Municipal Budget Act.** The City of Oklahoma City originally chose to begin using and complying with the Municipal Budget Act (Title 11 Sections 17-201 through 17-218) on December 18, 1979 (Item VIII. B.) for its budget process. The City will continue to follow the provisions and requirements of the Municipal Budget Act in its annual budgeting process.
3. **Borrowing for Operations.** The City will not borrow from any external source to fund ongoing operations.
4. **Reserves.** To meet unexpected needs and to minimize the disruption caused by decreases in

revenues and/or increases in expenditures from year to year, most City funds should maintain two types of reserves: contingency and operating reserve.

- a. **Contingency.** Each City fund should include an appropriation adequate to fund a contingency account of a targeted amount of two percent of the fund's budgeted expenditures. As needs arise, appropriations may be transferred from the contingency account within legal and procedural limitations on transfers. The Municipal Budget Act specifies that no more than ten percent of the total budget may be budgeted for miscellaneous purposes. This account would count as a miscellaneous expense for purposes of the Municipal Budget Act because what it will be used for cannot be known.
- b. **Operating Reserve.** Operating reserve is the fund balance carried forward into the next fiscal year that is not budgeted. Each city fund will maintain an operating reserve, although the requirements for operating reserve differ depending on the type of fund.
 - i. **General Fund:** The General Fund shall maintain operating reserves at the beginning of each fiscal year in the amount of no less than eight percent and no more than fifteen percent of the total General Fund budget for that fiscal year. This equates to maintaining approximately one to two months of expenditures in operating reserves. General Fund operating reserves should be counter cyclical; reserve requirements are higher when the financial condition of the City is better so that operating reserves may be drawn down should the financial condition worsen. If the operating reserve falls outside of the range eight to fifteen percent range, the City Manager will recommend appropriate action to address the situation.

- ii. **Other Funds:** Any fund that supports personnel or other ongoing operating expenditures shall maintain operating reserves at a target level of five to ten percent of the total budgeted expenditures of the fund for the ensuing fiscal year. For the purposes of this section, “budgeted expenditures” means total budgeted expenditures and budgeted transfers to other funds for the ensuing fiscal year for a fund. City enterprise funds that are fully supported by a trust of the City, such as the Oklahoma City Water Utilities Trust, Oklahoma City Airports Trust or the Oklahoma City Environmental Assistance Trust, are excepted from this operating reserve requirement. Funds that are fully supported by a trust will follow the trust policy for operating reserve requirements.
 - c. **Reporting requirements:** The City Manager shall notify the Mayor and Council of reserve and contingency levels for all funds in the proposed budget.
- 5. Performance-based Budget.** The City Manager shall develop and present a budget that includes meaningful measures of the performance of City government in meeting its various service demands. Such measures should be tied to individual programs, address specific services or functions and should measure the effectiveness and efficiency of services delivered rather than only the workload generated. Historical performance measures data and performance targets for the coming fiscal year shall be transmitted to the Mayor and City Council along with the proposed budget. The same information should be published in the Annual Budget Book. The City Manager shall take into account the validity of the measures and the ability of departments to meet the expected level of performance in allocating funds in the proposed budget.
- 6. Scope of Budget.** The annual budget shall estimate revenues and make appropriations for spending on all city, state, and federal funds estimated to be available to the City during the fiscal year, regardless from what source derived.
- a. Several funds within the budget have differing controls over them than the adopted budget. These are Grant Funds, the Debt Service Fund and the Bond Funds. While appropriations for these funds are contained in the annual budget, they are controlled by different sources than the annual budget.
 - i. The annual budget will contain an estimate of revenue and expenses in the Federal, state and private grant funds, however, the control on those funds is at the individual grant level, not at the broader fund level.
 - ii. The Debt Service (Sinking) Fund will be included in the annual budget, however, it is the County Excise Board which approves the final Debt Service budget. The Finance Department will amend the annual budget to bring it in line with the final budget approved by the County Excise Boards for the counties in which Oklahoma City is located, however, it is that budget and state law which governs the Debt Service (Sinking) Fund budget.

- iii. An estimate of Bond Fund expenditures will be included in the annual budget for information purposes. Spending in the Bond Funds is controlled by the requirements contained in the various ballots approved by voters and the legal restrictions placed on bond funds.

7. Annual Budget Book. In addition to the Annual Budget adopted by the City Council, the City shall make available an Annual Budget Book. This book shall include such additional information as may be useful to citizens, including information on programs, performance and staffing levels.

8. Appropriations for Fiscal Year.

- a. **Level of control.** The Annual Budget shall be filed with the State Auditor and Inspector as required by Title 11 Oklahoma Statutes, Section 17-209, to the level of specificity required by Title 11 Oklahoma Statutes, Section 17-213. The annual budget shall make appropriations specific to the fund, department and general character of expenditure. Funds may be encumbered in accordance with Title 62 Oklahoma Statutes, Section 310.2 and the City Charter and Code, provided that the unencumbered unexpended balance of the appropriation as a whole is not exceeded.
- b. **Transfers.** The Oklahoma Municipal Budget Act (Oklahoma Statutes Title 11, section 17-201 et. seq) provides for certain transfers of unexpended and unencumbered appropriations by the chief executive officer or designee as authorized by the governing body. In order to streamline the process and decrease delays in processing, the following policy is put in place:
 - i. The City Manager may authorize transfers of any unexpended and unencumbered appropriation or any portion thereof from one account to another within the same department or from one department to another within the same fund (Except that no appropriation for debt service or other appropriation required by law or ordinance may be reduced below the minimum required).
 - ii. The City Manager may designate the Assistant City Managers to authorize transfers.
 - iii. The Finance Director may authorize transfers between account classes (categories of budget as described in the Municipal Budget Act) within any department.
 - iv. The City Manager will inform the Council of all transfers through regular City Manager reports on adjustments to the budget by transfers.
- c. **Lapsed appropriations.** The fiscal year ends on June 30th. State law, under Title 62 of Oklahoma Statutes Section 310.4, provides a 90 day period from June 30th to September 30th where claims for payment for goods or services ordered in the previous fiscal year can be made against appropriations from the prior fiscal year. After that time, no further claims can be made against prior year appropriations.

9. Budget Amendments. The Annual Budget shall be amended in accordance with Title 11 Oklahoma Statutes, Section 17-216.

The governing body may amend the budget to make supplemental appropriations to any fund up to the amount of additional revenues which are available for current expenses for the fund due to:

- a. Revenues received or to be received from sources not anticipated in the budget for that year;
- b. Revenues received or to be received from anticipated sources but in excess of the budget estimates therefor; or
- c. Unexpended and unencumbered fund balances on hand at the end of the preceding fiscal year which had not been anticipated or appropriated in the budget. Any appropriation authorizing the creating of an indebtedness shall be governed by the applicable provisions of Article 10 of the Oklahoma Constitution.
 - i. If at any time during the budget year it appears probable that revenues available will be insufficient to meet the amount appropriated, or that due to unforeseen emergencies there is temporarily insufficient money in a particular fund to meet the requirements of appropriation for the fund, the governing body shall take action as it deems necessary. For that purpose, it may amend the budget to reduce one or more appropriations or it may amend the budget to transfer money from one fund to another fund, but no appropriation for debt service may be reduced and no appropriation may be reduced by more than the amount of the unencumbered and unexpended balance thereof. No transfer shall be made from the debt service fund to any other fund except as may be permitted by the terms of the bond issue or applicable law.
 - ii. A budget amendment as provided in this section authorizing supplemental appropriations or a decrease in the total appropriation of funds shall be adopted at a meeting of the governing body and filed with the municipal clerk and the State Auditor and Inspector.

Any resolution amending the budget of any fund to recognize and appropriate fund balance shall state the reason for the amendment and the estimated impact upon reserve levels.

10. Financial Forecast. The City Manager shall, at least, biennially prepare and transmit to the Mayor and City Council a forecast of City revenues and expenditures for the ensuing five years, and the major financial policy issues likely to be addressed in that five-year period.

11. Decentralization. The City Manager shall make every effort to involve departments in the preparation of the proposed budget and to give managers maximum legal flexibility in encumbering and expending funds once the budget is adopted. See e.g., Title 62 Oklahoma Statutes, Section 310.2.

- 12. Arbitrage Compliance.** To comply with federal regulations on interest earnings on tax-exempt bonds with the least impact on the operating budget, the City shall annually project payments to the federal government for arbitrage penalties, rebates and other payments for the next five years.
- 13. Spending for Capital Projects.** To preserve the investment in City facilities, vehicles, and infrastructure, to reduce the likelihood of service interruption due to facility or equipment failure, and to promote economic development, the City shall make efforts to increase General Fund spending for capital assets. The City shall attempt to commit any growth revenue from “*non-recurring*” revenue sources—to non-recurring expenses, such as capital expenditures.
- 14. Cost Allocation Plan.** The City Manager shall annually prepare and distribute a cost allocation plan. This plan should allocate the costs of the various administrative departments among all departments offering direct service to the public. The plan should conform to all requirements of federal funding agencies regarding such plans. The plan should be as simple as possible while maintaining equity. In preparing the cost allocation plan, the City Manager shall solicit input from both the administrative departments whose costs are allocated and the direct service departments to which costs are allocated. The City Manager may determine which allocated costs are paid from one department or fund to another based on ability to pay, but shall maintain equitable treatment of all departments or funds.
- 15. Interest and Investment Income.** Interest and investment income earned by each fund shall be deposited in the same fund. All interest and investment income shall have the same purpose as that of the fund.

Glossary

Definitions in quotes are taken directly from the Municipal Budget Act. Definitions without quotes are terms used by the City.

1. "Account" means an entity for recording specific revenues or expenditures, or for grouping related or similar classes of revenues and expenditures and recording them within a fund or department;
2. Account class – A category of expenses used in the budget and based on the Municipal Budget Act. Specifically Personal Services, Other Services and Charges, Supplies, Capital, Debt Service and Transfers.
3. "Appropriated fund balance" means any fund balance appropriated for a fund for the budget year;
4. "Appropriation" means an authorization to expend or encumber revenues and fund balance of a fund;

5. "Budget" means a plan of financial operations for a fiscal year, including an estimate of proposed expenditures for given purposes and the proposed means for financing them;
6. "Budget summary" means a tabular listing of revenues by source and expenditures by fund and by department within each fund for the budget year;
7. "Budget year" means the fiscal year for which a budget is prepared or being prepared;
8. "Chief executive officer" means the mayor of an aldermanic city or a strong-mayor-council city, the mayor of a town, or the city manager or chief administrative officer as it may be defined by applicable law, charter or ordinance;
9. "Current year" means the year in which the budget is prepared and adopted, or the fiscal year immediately preceding the budget year;
10. Contingency – A specific account that is budgeted that is for unanticipated expenses.
11. "Deficit" means the excess of a fund's current liabilities and encumbrances over its current financial assets as reflected by its books of account;
12. "Department" means a functional unit within a fund which carries on a specific activity, such as a fire department or a police department within a general fund;
13. "Estimated revenue" means the amount of revenues estimated to be received during the budget year in each fund for which a budget is prepared;
14. "Fiscal year" means the annual period for reporting fiscal operations which begins and ends on dates as the Legislature provides or as provided by law;
15. "Fund" means an independent fiscal and accounting entity with a self-balancing set of accounts to record cash and other financial resources, together with all liabilities, which are segregated for the purpose of carrying on specific activities or attaining certain objectives;
16. "Fund balance" means the excess of a fund's current financial assets over its current liabilities and encumbrances, as reflected by its books of account;
17. "Governing body" means the city council of a city, the board of trustees of a town, or the legislative body of a municipality as it may be defined by applicable law or charter provision;
18. "Immediate prior fiscal year" means the year preceding the current year;
19. "Levy" means to impose ad valorem taxes or the total amount of ad valorem taxes for a purpose or entity;

20. "Operating reserve" means that portion of the fund balance which has not been appropriated in a budget year; and
21. "Municipality" means any incorporated city or town.